

Message Text

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ACTION AF-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-11 IO-13 ISO-00 HA-05 CIAE-00
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FM AMEMBASSY LUSAKA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8674
INFO AMEMBASSY ABIDJAN
AMEMBASSY BANGUI
AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMCONSUL CAPE TOWN
AMEMBASSY DAKAR
AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM
AMEMBASSY GABORONE
AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM
AMEMBASSY KINSHASA
AMEMBASSY LAGOS
AMEMBASSY LIBREVILLE
AMEMBASSY LOME
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MAPUTO
AMEMBASSY MONROVIA
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY PRETORIA
AMEMBASSY RABAT
USMISSION USUN NEW YORK
AMEMBASSY YAOUNDE

C O N F I D E N T I A L LUSAKA 2147

CAPE TOWN FOR EMBASSY
DAR FOR AMBASSADOR LOW
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PARIS FOR ASST. SECY. MOOSE

3.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: PEPR, MOPS, CG, ZA
SUBJ: AFRICAN TROOPS IN SHABA: ZAMBIAN PERSPECTIVE

REF: (A) LUSAKA 2060, (B) LUSAKA 2087, (C) LUSAKA 2131,

(D) STATE 150529

1. SUMMARY: ZAMBIANS ARE UNCOMFORTABLE WITH PAN-AFRICAN FORCE IN SHABA BUT DO NOT OPPOSE IT OUT OF A MIXTURE OF CONCERN FOR STABILITY ON THEIR NORTHERN BORDER, FEAR OF MOBUTU AND CONCERN THAT USG MIGHT, IF CRITICIZED, LESSEN ITS INTEREST IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA SETTLEMENTS. THEY WOULD WELCOME BEING INFORMED OF ANY STEPS TAKEN TO LIMIT DURATION OF PAN-AFRICAN FORCE BUT WOULD HAVE LITTLE IN THE WAY OF SPECIFICS TO OFFER. IF CONSULTATION IS TO BE DONE IT SHOULD BE UNDER SOME SEMBLANCE OF AN OAU UMBRELLA OR AT LOW KEY EMBASSY LUSAKA TO GRZ LEVEL AND BE BASICALLY INFORMATIONAL IN NATURE. END SUMMARY.

2. AS NOTED IN LUSAKA REFTELS, THE GRZ IS UNCOMFORTABLE WITH THE CONCEPT OF A WESTERN-BACKED, APPARENTLY FRENCH-DOMINATED AFRICAN FORCE IN SHABA, ESPECIALLY ONE OPERATING OUTSIDE THE OAU CONTEXT. SUCH A FORCE RAISES ALL OF THE OLD SPECTRES OF COLONIALIST, NEO-COLONIALIST MACHINATIONS IN AFRICA. IN ADDITION, TO ACCEPT SUCH A CONCEPT CARRIES WITH IT THE HUMILITATING ADMISSION THAT AFRICANS CANNOT HANDLE THEIR OWN PROBLEMS. ONE WOULD EXPECT THE GUT REACTION OF PRESIDENT KAUNDA TO BE HARSH, UNCONTROLLED CONDEMNATION OF THE WHOLE IDEA. INSTEAD, AS WE HAVE POINTED OUT IN PREVIOUS TELEGRAMS, KAUNDA AND HIS GOVERNMENT HAVE CHOSEN TO TAKE THE POSITION THAT THEY WILL NEITHER SUPPORT NOR OPPOSE THE PAN-AFRICAN FORCE.
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3. THIS POSITION IS AN UNBASY COMPROMISE BETWEEN WHAT THEIR EMOTIONS TELL THEM THEY SHOULD DO (CONDEMNATION) AND RATIONALITY. ON THE RATIONAL LEVEL THEY RECOGNIZE THAT THEY HAVE A VESTED INTEREST IN STABILITY ON THEIR NORTHERN BORDER. THEY WOULD FAR PREFER THAT STABILITY BE BASED ON, AS KAUNDA SO OFTEN HAS SAID, RECONCILIATION BETWEEN THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT OF ZAIRE AND SHABA AND BETWEEN ZAIRE AND ANGOLA. BARRING THIS, WITH CONSIDERABLE HEARTBURN, THEY ARE PREPARED TO ACCEPT AN AFRICAN FORCE IN SHABA. THEY DO SO EVEN IF, IN THEIR EYES, THE FORCE HAS NEO-COLONIALIST OVERTONES SINCE SUCH A FORCE DOES PROVIDE SOME GUARANTEE OF STABILITY. AN UNDERLYING THEME OF THEIR ACCEPTANCE IS THE HOPE, NOT HELD WITH ANY GREAT CONFIDENCE, THAT MOBUTU WILL USE THE RESPITE GIVEN HIM TO PUT HIS HOUSE IN ORDER. ALSO RESTRAINING ZAMBIA'S NATURAL DESIRE TO CONDEMN THE AFRICAN FORCE IS A FEAR THAT THEY MIGHT BE SUBJECT TO ZAIRIAN INSPIRED INCURSIONS INTO ZAMBIA IF THEY PUSH MOBUTU TOO FAR. AND ONE FURTHER ELEMENT IN THEIR CALCULATION IS THAT CONDEMNATION MIGHT HAVE A NEGATIVE IMPACT ON THE USG'S COMMITMENT TO MAJORITY RULE IN RHODESIA AND NAMIBIA, AND INCLINE US TO VIEW THESE PROBLEMS IN STRICTLY EAST-WEST TERMS.

4. WE KNOW FROM OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH THE ZAMBIANS THAT THEY ARE ANXIOUS TO BE INFORMED OF WHAT IS HAPPENING IN SHABA. THEY ARE ALERT TO ANY SIGNALS THAT AN AFRICAN FORCE IS CONCEIVED OF AS PERMANENT OR SEMI-PERMANENT IN NATURE. ALSO, THEY CONSTANTLY SEARCH FOR SIGNS THAT MOBUTU IS PREPARED TO TAKE THE RECONCILIATION ROUTE. WE WOULD ESTIMATE THEIR INTEREST IN STEPS TAKEN TO LIMIT THE DURATION OF THE CURRENT SHABA OPERATION WOULD BE HIGH, AND THEY WOULD APPRECIATE BEING BRIEFED ON WHAT ACTIONS ARE TAKEN IN THIS REGARD. HOWEVER, WE FIND IT DIFFICULT TO SEE HOW WE WOULD MOVE FROM INFORMING TO CONSULTING THE GRZ ABOUT SPECIFICS REPORTING TO THE RETRAINING OF ZAIRIAN FORCES TO REPLACE THOSE FROM OUTSIDE. WHILE THEIR INTEREST WOULD BE HIGH, THEY WOULD HAVE LITTLE TO OFFER UNLESS WE ARE CONTEMPLATING ASKING AFRICAN STATES LIKE ZAMBIA TO PARTICIPATE IN THE

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RETRAINING EXERCISE. IF WE WISH TO GO THROUGH WITH A CONSULTATION EXERCISE FOR COSMETIC PURPOSES, THEN WE BELIEVE THE ZAMBIANS WOULD BE MOST RECEPTIVE TO CONSULTATION UNDER AN OAU UMBRELLA, NO MATTER HOW FLIMSY. IF THIS IS NOT POSSIBLE, THEN CONSULTATION SHOULD BE AT THE EMBASSY LUSAKA TO THE GRZ LEVEL AND SHOULD BE KEPT AT A LOW KEY AND BASICALLY DESIGNED TO ASSURE THE ZAMBIANS THAT OUR INTENTIONS IN SHABA ARE HONORABLE.

CLINGERMAN

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